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Iowa Legislative Services Agency
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

October 2013

VETERANS AND MILITARY BENEFITS

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I. Introduction

The purpose of this Legislative Guide is to provide an overview of the history and scope of benefits currently available in this state to individuals who serve or have served in the armed forces of the United States, in the Iowa National Guard, or the Iowa Air National Guard. This Legislative Guide focuses primarily upon resources and benefits provided by the State of Iowa. Unless otherwise stated, citations to Iowa law in this Legislative Guide are to the 2014 Iowa Code.

II. Background and Overview

The federal government and the State of Iowa both have long histories of making available benefits programs to the men and women who have served in the United States armed forces. From the provision of pensions to injured Union veterans and widowed spouses of Civil War veterans to the provision of educational and home ownership assistance to service members returning from the United States' most recent foreign engagements of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, both federal and state governments have implemented programs to assist service members in the transition from military to civilian life. This Legislative Guide provides information on many of the current state benefits available to Iowa residents who are or were once members of the armed forces of the United States, the Iowa National Guard, and the Iowa Air National Guard. Among these benefit programs are those related to education, workforce development, home ownership assistance, property tax exemptions and credits, certain income tax exemptions, special hunting and driver's licenses, medical care, and certain other family benefits.

Early Federal Benefits. The provision of veterans benefits in the United States has historically been a contentious subject of American public policy. In the wake of the Civil War, the United States provided pensions to certain veterans and established national cemeteries, including the Keokuk National Cemetery in Iowa, for the burial of Civil War veterans. Following the end of World War I, however, many of America's veterans received nothing more than a \$60 allowance to purchase a train ticket home.¹ Approximately 4.7 million Americans served in the United States military in World War I with 116,000 American dead and some 204,000 wounded.² In order to provide a safety net and retraining for the war injured, the United States Congress passed the War Risk Insurance Act Amendments of 1917, Pub. L. No. 65-20 and Pub. L. No. 65-90,³ and later the Vocation Rehabilitation Act of 1918, Pub. L. No. 65-178,⁴ but these statutes predominantly sought to provide resources only for disabled veterans returning to the United States.⁵ On May 19, 1924, the United States Congress sought to provide additional resources to the veterans of

¹ United States Department of Veterans Affairs, "The GI BILL's History" *available at*: http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/history_timeline/index.html (last visited August 5, 2013).

² United States Department of Veterans Affairs, "VA History in Brief," p. 7 *available at*: http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/archives/docs/history_in_brief.pdf (last visited August 5, 2013).

³ Id.

⁴ Congressional Research Service. Veterans' Benefits: The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program, August 21, 2008

⁵ See also Department of Veterans Affairs. VA Disability Compensation Program: Legislative History, December 2004, pp. 27-52, *available at*: http://www.va.gov/op3/docs/ProgramEvaluations/DisCompProgram/Disability_Comp_Legislative_Histor_Lit_Review.pdf (last visited August 5, 2013).

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World War I with passage of the World War Adjusted Compensation Act of 1924, better known as the Bonus Act.

The Bonus Act established a program that provided the majority of veterans with an insurance policy that furnished a \$1.00 bonus for every day the veteran served within the United States between certain specified dates up to a total of \$500 and an additional \$1.25 bonus for every day served abroad up to a total of \$625. Most veterans, however, were issued adjusted service certificates that could only be reimbursed some 20 years after the date they were issued.⁶ When the country found itself in the grips of the Great Depression, a number of these veterans experienced economic and personal hardships, and began to more stridently demand early payment of their bonuses. In March 1932, a small group of World War I veterans began to march from Oregon to the United States Capitol to demand payment of their bonuses. The movement grew to between 15,000 and 40,000 members, later known as “Bonus Expeditionary Forces,” as they descended on the nation’s capital. On June 17, 1932, while the Senate was considering legislation for the immediate payment of the bonuses, a group of the marchers surrounded the Capitol building, but the legislation was nonetheless overwhelmingly defeated.⁷ During the course of that summer, riots erupted in Washington, D.C., and the marchers were eventually removed from the city by force. Quiet was eventually restored to the nation’s capital with the passage of a bill allowing the Department of Veterans Affairs to pay the costs for veterans and their families to return to their homes.⁸

GI Bill of Rights. The experience of Bonus marchers informed the next generation of American policymakers who would establish benefits programs for the veterans of America’s next major conflict, World War II. Some 16.1 million troops served in the armed forces of the United States during World War II. Millions of these service members served for more than four years. Of those, 671,817 men and women were wounded, 405,399 were killed, and hundreds of thousands of military dependents were left deprived of their beloved service members and deprived of financial security.⁹ In the summer of 1944, before World War II had ended, Congress passed and President Franklin Roosevelt signed what is today known as the “GI Bill of Rights.”¹⁰ The bill provided for three distinct forms of benefits to veterans returning home from the European and Japanese theaters: educational and vocational training programs; a home, farm, and business loan guarantee program; and, perhaps most controversially, an unemployment benefit program. These programs provided a college education or vocational training to 7.8 million veterans and \$50.1 billion in guaranteed home loans to 5.9 million veterans. The implementation of this Act effectively transformed America’s economy and the broader landscape of the United States in the process.¹¹ The State of Iowa acted as well to provide conflict bonuses to veterans and benefits to war orphans.¹²

⁶ Id. at 9.

⁷ Id. at 10.

⁸ Id.

⁹ Id. at 13.

¹⁰ Id. The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 was signed into law on June 22, 1944.

¹¹ Id. at 14.

¹² The State of Iowa provided conflict bonuses to certain service members who served during the period of the Vietnam Conflict (see 2011 Iowa Code §35A.8A). Iowa, however, began providing educational benefits to the orphaned children of veterans from the earlier conflicts of World War I and World War II (see 1939 Iowa Code §482.08 and 1946 Iowa Code §35.8).



Recent Benefits. Since September 11, 2001, the federal government and the State of Iowa have enacted new military and veteran benefit programs and expanded existing programs. Among others, the federal government enacted the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, more popularly known as the “Post-9/11 GI Bill” to provide up to 36 months of education benefits to qualifying individuals.¹³ The State of Iowa has also worked to provide new and expanded resources to veterans in the wake of America’s most recent military engagements, including Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation New Dawn. The programs and benefit changes implemented in Iowa include revisions to the National Guard Educational Assistance Program, revisions to the War Orphans Educational Assistance Fund, as well as the provision of benefits related to homeownership assistance, property tax exemptions and credits, certain income tax exemptions, waivers from certain hunting and fishing licensing fees, as well as provisions to aid injured veterans and their families, provide broad assistance to veterans through the establishment of the Veterans Trust Fund, and recognize service members through various mediums, both on certain state-issued identification cards and on state license plates.

III. Benefits Relating to Education

A. National Guard Educational Assistance Program

Iowa Code section 261.86 provides for the establishment of the National Guard Educational Assistance Program (NGEAP) administered by the College Student Aid Commission with eligibility determination decisions made by the Adjutant General. Members of the Iowa National Guard who are enrolled as undergraduates at a community college, Board of Regents university, or an accredited private institution, are eligible to participate in the program if they are a resident of Iowa and are a member of an Iowa Army National Guard or Iowa Air National Guard unit while receiving program benefits. Individuals participating in the program must also have satisfactorily completed initial active duty training, met necessary performance requirements, provided notice of enrollment at an eligible institution, and submitted a program application. An individual is not eligible for the program if the individual has already met the academic requirements for receipt of a baccalaureate degree.¹⁴ Financial assistance under the program is limited to eight semesters of full-time, or 16 semesters of part-time undergraduate study.¹⁵

¹³ Title V of the Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-252.

¹⁴ Iowa Code §261.86 (1), (3).

¹⁵ Iowa Code §261.86(3).

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Assistance received through the NGEAP is not permitted to exceed the resident tuition rate established for Board of Regents universities. If the moneys appropriated to the College Student Aid Commission for the operation of the program are insufficient to provide assistance to eligible applicants, the Adjutant General and the College Student Aid Commission are required to determine how to distribute the appropriated moneys. The assistance received under this program cannot, however, equal less than the lower of either 50 percent of the resident tuition rate established by the Board of Regents for resident tuition or 50 percent of the tuition rate at the institution attended by the guard member.¹⁶

The program has recently provided educational assistance to members of the Iowa National Guard attending 30 private colleges and universities, 15 community colleges, three proprietary colleges, and Iowa's three Board of Regents universities.¹⁷ Since the creation of the NGEAP in 1997, the State of Iowa has provided nearly \$42 million in educational assistance through this program as detailed in Table 1, below. For the 2012-13 academic year, the highest annual award under NGEAP is \$6,658, the average resident tuition rate for full-time students at Iowa Regents universities (\$3,329 per full-time semester or \$2,220/\$2,219/\$2,219 per full-time quarter).¹⁸

To apply for assistance through the National Guard Educational Assistance Program, an eligible member of the Iowa National Guard must apply by July 1 each year for the fall enrollment and by December 1 for spring enrollment. Beginning July 1, 2013, these application deadlines do not apply to members of the National Guard serving on federal active duty at the time of the deadline.¹⁹

Certain additional assistance may be available to members of the Iowa National Guard through the federal government's GoArmyEd program for graduate students, students enrolled in online courses, and students enrolling in summer courses.

¹⁶ Iowa Code §261.86(2).

¹⁷ Iowa College Student Aid Commission, 2012-2013 Student Financial Aid Guide, Ch. 11, p. 1.

¹⁸ Id. at 5.

¹⁹ 2013 Acts ch. 46 (SF 332), amending Iowa Code §261.86(1).

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Table 1

Iowa National Guard Educational Assistance Program Funding History ²⁰				
Year	Total Funding		Academic Year	Total Funding
1997-98	\$625,000		2005-06	\$3,725,000
1998-99	\$833,900		2006-07	\$3,725,000
1999-00	\$833,900		2007-08	\$3,800,000
2000-01	\$1,250,000		2008-09	\$3,742,629
2001-02	\$1,175,000		2009-10	\$3,841,903
2002-03	\$1,175,000		2010-11	\$3,186,233
2003-04	\$1,175,000		2011-12	\$4,486,233
2004-05	\$3,550,000		2012-13	\$4,800,233

Table 2

Iowa National Guard Educational Assistance Program Part-Time Maximum Award 2012-13 Academic Year ²¹		
Hours Enrolled	Maximum Award by Semester	Maximum Award by Quarter
1	\$278	\$185
2	\$555	\$370
3	\$832	\$555
4	\$1,110	\$740
5	\$1,387	\$925
6	\$1,665	\$1,110
7	\$1,942	\$1,295
8	\$2,220	\$1,480
9	\$2,497	\$1,665
10	\$2,774	\$1,849
11	\$3,052	\$2,035

²⁰ Id. at 2.

²¹ Id. at 6.

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B. Operation Recognition High School

The Director of the Department of Education is required to administer Operation Recognition with the cooperation of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The program was created to award high school diplomas to honorably discharged veterans of World War I, World War II, and the Korean and Vietnam conflicts who did not complete high school in order to enter into United States military service.²² The Department of Education and the Department of Veterans Affairs have created and distributed program application materials describing qualifying dates of service as follows:

	<u>Commencement</u>		<u>Conclusion</u>
World War I:	April 6, 1917	through	November 11, 1918
World War II:	September 16, 1940	through	December 31, 1946
Korean Conflict:	June 25, 1950	through	January 31, 1955
Vietnam Conflict:	February 28, 1961	through	May 5, 1975

The Department of Education and the Department of Veterans Affairs are required to publicize the program through school districts and accredited nonpublic schools, county commissions of veterans affairs, veterans organizations, and through media outlets. All honorably discharged veterans who served during the above time periods and are residents or former residents of Iowa are eligible to receive an honorary high school diploma under this program if they did not return to school and complete their high school education following the end of the war or conflict.²³ Honorary diplomas under this program may also be awarded posthumously with the diplomas being mailed to the veteran's family.²⁴

IV. Home Ownership and Property Tax

A. Military Home Ownership Assistance Program

The Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) administers the Home Ownership Assistance Program for Military Families to provide loans, grants, and other means of assistance to eligible members of the United States armed forces for the purchase of a primary residence in Iowa.²⁵ To be considered eligible, the individual must have served a cumulative 90 days on active duty after September 11, 2001, or have suffered an injury that precluded completion of such a period of service while serving on federal active duty after September 11, 2001.²⁶ The surviving spouse of an eligible member of the armed forces is eligible for

²² Iowa Code §256.9(44).

²³ Iowa Code §256.9(44).

²⁴ Iowa Code §256.9(44).

²⁵ Iowa Code §16.54(2),(3).

²⁶ Iowa Code §16.54(1).



the program if the spouse meets the program's requirements other than the military service requirement.²⁷

For a home purchase to qualify under this program, the eligible individual must receive prior approval before closing on a qualified home, use an IFA participating lender or a lender approval specifically to facilitate loans under the program, and, if applicable, participate in other IFA homebuyer programs.²⁸ In addition to the loans offered under this program, the IFA also provides grants of up to \$5,000 for down payment assistance or closing costs or both for a qualifying home.²⁹

For additional information, contact the Iowa Finance Authority at 1-800-432-7230 or homebuyer.inquiry@iowa.gov.³⁰

B. Military Service Property Tax Credit and Exemption

Iowa provides a property tax exemption — payable as a credit against taxes due — for military veterans, as defined in statute,³¹ and for individuals who have established a minimum aggregate of 18 months of military service and were honorably discharged and for individuals who were honorably discharged due to a service-related injury who served fewer than 18 months.³² This property tax credit is limited to \$1,852 in exempted value and is partially paid for with a standing unlimited appropriation from the General Fund of the State.³³ Local governments are partially reimbursed by the state for providing the military service tax exemption in an amount equal to the amount the local government would have collected had a consolidated levy rate not to exceed \$6.92 per \$1,000 of assessed value been levied against the exempted valuation.³⁴ Certain relatives including a spouse, parent, or child of a qualifying veteran may be allowed to claim this tax exemption assuming they meet the criteria to qualify.³⁵ In 2010, the State of Iowa appropriated \$2.4 million for these exemptions.³⁶ A claim for the military tax credit and exemption must be filed or mailed by July 1³⁷ and the claim form is available at <http://www.iowa.gov/tax/forms/54146.pdf>. Upon the filing and allowance of the claim, the credit is allowed for successive years without further filing.³⁸

C. Disabled Veteran Homestead Property Tax Credit

Iowa provides that certain disabled veterans who are eligible for a homestead property tax credit are allowed a homestead credit for the full amount of the property taxes

²⁷ Iowa Code §16.54(3).

²⁸ Iowa Code §16.54(4); Iowa Admin. Code 265-27.3.

²⁹ Iowa Admin. Code 265-27.4.

³⁰ See also www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Public/Pages/PC79LN30 (last visited September 13, 2013).

³¹ See Iowa Code §426A.11(2) citing to the definition of "veteran" in Iowa Code §35.1(2)(a) and (b).

³² Iowa Code §426A.11(4)

³³ Iowa Code §426A.1A and §426A.11. For World War I veterans, the amount of value exempted for purposes of calculating the credit is \$2,778.

³⁴ Iowa Code §426A.2.

³⁵ Iowa Code §426A.12.

³⁶ Iowa Department of Revenue, "An Introduction to Iowa Property Tax" available at: <http://www.iowa.gov/tax/educate/78573.html>, (last visited August 5, 2013).

³⁷ Iowa Code §426A.13.

³⁸ Iowa Code §426A.13.



levied on the homestead.³⁹ To be eligible for the Disabled Veteran Homestead Tax Credit, the veteran's annual income, together with the veteran's spouse, cannot exceed \$35,000 for the preceding 12 months.⁴⁰ A surviving spouse or any child of a deceased veteran may continue to receive the credit as long as the spouse remains unmarried.⁴¹ A claim for the Disabled Veteran Homestead Tax Credit must be filed or mailed by July 1⁴² and the claim form is available at <http://www.iowa.gov/tax/forms/54049.pdf>.

D. Military Foreclosure and Creditor Protections

1. Iowa Code section 654.17C prohibits a creditor from initiating a proceeding to enforce an obligation for the purchase of real estate on contract or secured by a mortgage against an individual who is a member of the Iowa National Guard or a member of a reserve or regular component of the United States armed forces while the service member is on active duty.

2. The State of Iowa provides certain additional civil relief to members of the Iowa National Guard pursuant to the provisions of Iowa Code chapter 29A, subchapter VI. This subchapter provides relief and protections to service members and their dependents that relate to civil law matters, including the reopening of default judgments, stays of judicial proceedings, certain fines and penalties under contracts, the computation of statutes of limitation, rates of interest, the termination of lease or rental agreements, and obligations to maintain professional liability insurance.

V. State Individual Income Tax and Workforce Development

A. State Individual Income Tax

Iowa Code provides that certain income received for military service may be subtracted from an individual's income for the purpose of computing the service member's net income in determining state income tax liability. For the purpose of computing state income tax liability, an individual may subtract income received from the following sources:

- The amount of withdrawals from qualified retirement plan accounts made during the tax year if the taxpayer or taxpayer's spouse is a member of the Iowa National Guard or reserve forces of the United States who is ordered to state military service or federal service or duty.⁴³
- Active duty pay received by a person in the national guard or armed forces military reserve for service performed on or after January 1, 2003, pursuant to military orders related to Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, Operation Noble Eagle, and Operation Enduring Freedom.⁴⁴

³⁹ Iowa Code §425.15.

⁴⁰ Iowa Code §425.15.

⁴¹ Iowa Code §425.15.

⁴² Iowa Code §425.15.

⁴³ Iowa Code §422.7(38).

⁴⁴ Iowa Code §422.7(40).



- Military student loan repayments received by the taxpayer serving on active duty in the national guard or armed forces military reserve or on active duty status in the armed forces.⁴⁵
- All pay received by the taxpayer from the federal government for military service performed while on active duty status in the armed forces, the armed forces military reserve, or the national guard.⁴⁶

B. Veterans Preference in Public Employment and Workforce Development

Iowa Code section 35C.1 provides that veterans who are citizens and residents of the United States are entitled to an employment preference in every public department of the state, and preferences in employment with all counties, cities, and school corporations of the state. The preference is applied over other applicants of no greater qualifications.

The Iowa Department of Workforce Development also provides eligible veterans and spouses with priority service under federal workforce development programs. Additionally, the department employs veterans representatives who are veterans themselves. These veteran representatives can be contacted at the locations provided in Appendix C.⁴⁷

VI. State-Issued Licenses, Identification, and Vehicle Tags

A. Hunting and Fishing Licenses

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources provides lifetime fishing licenses and lifetime hunting and fishing combined licenses to disabled veterans and ex-prisoners of war for a fee of \$5 plus processing.⁴⁸ Additionally, any service member deployed for military service is entitled to receive a partial refund equivalent to the portion of the fee representing the service member's period of military service.⁴⁹

Beginning July 1, 2013, 25 nonresident deer hunting licenses and wild turkey hunting licenses are required to be available for issuance to certain nonresidents who served in or currently serve in the armed forces of the United States and were disabled during such service, in order to participate in a hunt that is conducted by an organization that conducts hunting experiences for disabled persons.⁵⁰

B. Veteran Status Marking on Driver's Licenses and Identification Cards

In 2012, legislation was enacted allowing honorably discharged veterans to request that the Department of Transportation mark the individual's driver's license or nonoperator's identification card with an indication of the individual's veteran status. An individual requesting that such a mark appear on the individual's driver's license or nonoperator's identification card is required to provide adequate proof of the individual's veteran status.⁵¹

⁴⁵ Iowa Code §422.7(42).

⁴⁶ Iowa Code §422.7(42A).

⁴⁷ Iowa Department of Workforce Development. See <http://www.iowaworkforce.org/veterans/>.

⁴⁸ Iowa Code §483A.24(16).

⁴⁹ Iowa Code §483A.24A.

⁵⁰ 2013 Iowa Acts ch. 61 (HF 361), enacting Iowa Code §483A.24(5).

⁵¹ 2012 Iowa Acts ch. 1091, §§2-3. Iowa Code §§321.189(8) and 321.190(1)(b).

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C. Veterans License Plates

The Iowa Department of Transportation provides certain special military service plates to service members and veterans or their surviving spouses.⁵² Special plates available to service members and veterans are presented below in Table 3.

Table 3

Special Military and Veteran Plates		
1. Bronze Star Plates	7. Medal of Honor Plates	13. Retired Marine Plates
2. Disabled Veteran Plates	8. Pearl Harbor Veteran Plates	14. Retired Navy Plates
3. Ex-Prisoner of War Plates	9. Purple Heart Plates	15. US Armed Forces Plates
4. Gold Star Family Plates	10. Retired Air Force Plates	16. Silver Star Plates
5. Iowa National Guard Plates	11. Retired Army Plates	17. Veteran Plates
6. Legion of Merit Plates	12. Retired Coast Guard Plates	

VII. Injured Veterans Grant Program

In 2006, the Iowa General Assembly passed and the Governor signed legislation creating the Injured Veterans Grant Program to provide grants to seriously injured veterans and their families.⁵³ The legislation provided \$1 million for the creation of the program to be administered by the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs. The statute provides for grants of up to \$10,000 to seriously injured veterans whose injuries occurred in combat zones or in zones where the veteran was receiving hazardous duty pay, after September 11, 2001.⁵⁴ Iowa Code section 35A.14 further provides that the purpose of the grants shall be to provide assistance so that the family members of a seriously injured veteran may be with the veteran during the veteran's recovery.

The injured veterans grants are to be paid in increments of \$2,500 to the veteran for the expenses of their families up to the \$10,000 maximum. The statute and rules promulgated by the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs specify that the purpose of the grant program is to provide immediate financial assistance to veterans and their families and describes the following schedule for grant disbursements:⁵⁵

- \$2,500 paid when the veteran is medically evacuated from a combat zone following a combat-related injury.
- \$2,500 paid 30 days after the evacuation if the veteran is still hospitalized or receiving medical treatment or rehabilitation services provided by the military or the Veterans Administration.

⁵² Iowa Code §321.34.

⁵³ 2006 Acts ch. 1106, enacting Iowa Code §35A.14.

⁵⁴ Iowa Code §35A.14(4).

⁵⁵ Iowa Admin. Code 801-11.2(1); Iowa Code §35A.14(5).

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- \$2,500 paid 60 days after the evacuation if the veteran is still hospitalized or receiving medical treatment or rehabilitation services provided by the military or the Veterans Administration.
- \$2,500 paid 90 days after the evacuation if the veteran is still hospitalized or receiving medical treatment or rehabilitation services provided by the military or the Veterans Administration.

The rules further provide that treatment or services eligible for reimbursement must be provided in a location that is not the veteran's home of record.⁵⁶

Legislation enacted in 2011 allows for a veteran to be eligible for additional injured veterans grants for subsequent, unrelated injuries that also meet the eligibility requirements.⁵⁷ An injured veterans grant is exempt from Iowa income taxation.⁵⁸

VIII. Veterans Trust Fund

A. Veterans Trust Fund

The Veterans Trust Fund was established by 2003 Iowa Acts chapter 131, enacting Iowa Code section 35A.13. The trust fund is controlled by the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs, and can be used to provide grants to veterans and their families for certain specified purposes. Grants from the Veterans Trust Fund may be provided to qualified veterans for the following purposes:⁵⁹

- Travel expenses for wounded veterans, and their spouses, for follow-up medical care.
- Job training or college tuition assistance for job retraining.
- Unemployment assistance during a period of unemployment due to physical or mental illness or disability resulting from military service.
- Certain expenses related to the purchase of durable medical equipment.
- Expenses for hearing care, dental care, vision care, prescription drugs, or certain medical screenings.
- Individual or family counseling.
- Family support group programs or programs for children of members of the military.
- Honor guard services.
- Expenses related to ambulance and emergency room services.
- Emergency expenses related to vehicle repair, home repair, or temporary housing assistance.

⁵⁶ Iowa Admin. Code 801-11.2(2).

⁵⁷ 2011 Iowa Acts ch. 12; Iowa Code §35A.14(5)(d).

⁵⁸ Iowa Code §422.7(46).

⁵⁹ Iowa Code §35A.13(6)(a)-(m).

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- Expenses for establishing whether a minor child is a dependent of a deceased veteran.
- Certain matching funds to veterans organizations for the provision of accredited veterans service offices.

Legislation enacted between 2006 and 2009 provided appropriations to the trust fund and set requirements necessary for the expenditure of funds.⁶⁰ In order for the commission to provide grants to veterans, however, the trust fund was required to reach a minimum balance of at least \$5 million with the stated intention of the General Assembly that the trust fund reaches a balance of \$50 million.⁶¹ In 2008, the General Assembly established limited series lottery games to finance the Veterans Trust Fund.⁶² Since July 2008, the Iowa Lottery Authority estimates that \$8.55 million of lottery proceeds from the veterans limited series lottery have been directed to the Veterans Trust Fund.⁶³ The authority estimates that between \$2 million and \$3 million in lottery proceeds are transferred to the trust fund each year.⁶⁴

The Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs reports the balance of the trust fund and all expenditures from the fund to the General Assembly by January 15 of each year.⁶⁵ The most recent report from January 15, 2012, noted expenditures of \$173,030 in 2009 followed by a decline to \$102,650 in grants awarded in 2010. The report also noted that \$41,847 had been spent on veterans grants in 2011, but noted that there was a waiting list totaling \$92,210. Since 2009, according to this report, no grants have been awarded for categories related to emergency room care, hearing care, prescription drugs, DNA testing, travel assistance, counseling services, or benefits for children of disabled or deceased veterans. Since April 2009, the commission has temporarily suspended the provision of grants in those areas as well as in the area of education and tuition assistance.⁶⁶ Table 4, below, details the grant expenditures by category, rounded to the nearest dollar.

⁶⁰ See 2006 Iowa Acts ch. 1110, 2006 Iowa Acts ch. 1185 §66 - 68, 2008 Iowa Acts ch. 1012, and 2008 Iowa Acts ch. 1129 §1, 2, 3, and 9.

⁶¹ Iowa Code §35A.13(4).

⁶² See 2008 Iowa Acts ch. 1012; enacting Iowa Code §99G.9A.

⁶³ See <http://www.ialottery.com/pressroom/wherethemoneygoes.asp>, (last visited August 5, 2013).

⁶⁴ Id.

⁶⁵ Iowa Code §35A.13(9).

⁶⁶ Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs, "Iowa Veterans Trust Fund 2011 Report," January 15, 2012, *available at*: https://www.legis.iowa.gov/DOCS/LSA/SC_MaterialsDist/2012/SDJDA012.PDF, (last visited September 13, 2013).

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Table 4

Veterans Trust Fund Expenditures* 2009 - 2011 ⁶⁷				
Assistance Category	Total \$ Spent in 2009	Total \$ Spent in 2010	Total \$ Spent in 2011	Total \$ Approved pending available funding 2011
Unemployment	\$42,500 (30)	\$15,000 (11)	\$6,500 (3)	\$3,500 (2)
Housing Repair	\$47,384 (20)	\$16,282 (11)	\$13,150 (5)	\$19,992 (9)
Dental	\$76,420 (48)	\$57,539 (40)	\$16,628 (10)	\$49,694 (27)
Vehicle Repair	\$3,522 (3)	\$13,017 (8)	\$5,570 (4)	\$17,742 (15)
Education/Tuition Assistance	\$963 (1)	\$0 (0)	\$0 (0)	\$0 (0)
Durable Equipment	\$1,232 (2)	\$0 (0)	\$0 (0)	\$377 (1)
Transitional Housing	\$171 (1)	\$400 (1)	\$0 (0)	\$0 (0)
Vision	\$838 (3)	\$413 (2)	\$0 (0)	\$905 (2)
TOTAL	\$173,030 (108)	\$102,651 (73)	\$41,848 (22)	\$92,210 (56)

*The total number of grants for each category appears in parentheses.

Prior to 2012, only interest and earnings from the trust fund was expendable for veterans grants issued by the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs. Low interest rates in recent years paired with stable numbers of requests for grants from veterans and veterans organizations, however, led to backlogs that could not be financed under a structure that only allowed interest and earnings to be expended. With the enactment of 2012 Iowa Acts chapter 1139, the commission is authorized to spend not only the interest and earnings from the fund but also up to \$300,000 of the moneys allocated to the fund each year from limited series lottery moneys pursuant to Iowa Code section 99G.9A. Such moneys may be utilized for any purposes allowable under Iowa Code section 35A.13.⁶⁸

The Act also provided for a one-time transfer of \$300,000 from the balance of the trust fund to the commission to address the backlog of claims for veterans grants. As of August 31, 2012, the trust fund had a balance of \$16.4 million with a total spendable balance of \$212,000.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Id.

⁶⁸ 2012 Iowa Acts ch. 1139.

⁶⁹ 2012 Iowa Acts ch. 1139.



B. War Orphans Educational Assistance Account

The War Orphans Educational Assistance Account was created as the War Orphans Educational Assistance Fund under control of the Department of Veterans Affairs to benefit the children of honorably discharged veterans of World War I and World War II and operated to provide such benefits until the enactment of 1999 Iowa Acts, chapter 180, which expanded the purpose of the fund to provide educational assistance to the children of additional groups of veterans.⁷⁰ On July 1, 2013, the moneys in the fund were transferred to a separate account of the Veterans Trust Fund under the control of the Commission of Veterans Affairs.⁷¹ Iowa Code section 35A.13, subsection 7, provides for two different categories of educational assistance to eligible children. The statute creates separate benefits first for children of a veteran who died while on active military service before September 11, 2001, and secondly for children of a veteran who died while on active military service on or after September 11, 2001.

The first category of educational assistance provides financial assistance to children from the account of up to \$600 each year, up to a lifetime total of \$3,000 per eligible child. The money received by the child may be used to defray tuition expenses, matriculation, laboratory and similar fees; books and supplies costs; board and lodging; and other reasonably necessary expenses the child incurs to attend college or a business or vocational training school in Iowa.

The second category of educational assistance is directed to individuals under 31 years of age who are the children of a veteran who died while in federal military service on or after September 11, 2001. The qualifying veteran must have also maintained a residence in the state for at least six months immediately prior to entering into federal military service and the veteran's child must begin their post-secondary education before reaching age 26. A child who qualifies for such assistance is eligible to receive educational assistance equal to no more than the highest resident undergraduate tuition for an institution of higher learning under the control of the Board of Regents. This assistance is intended solely to defray the costs of tuition and is therefore reduced by the amount of any state and federal education benefits, grants, or scholarships. A child eligible under this category may receive no more than the equivalent of five times the highest resident undergraduate tuition per year at a Board of Regents university. Awards offered under this program are paid directly to the approved educational institution.

IX. Iowa Veterans Home

The Iowa Veterans Home (IVH) was founded in 1887 and is the third largest state-owned facility for veterans in the United States.⁷² The IVH is statutorily required to be maintained as a long-term health care facility serving honorably discharged veterans and their dependent spouses, as well as the surviving spouses of honorably discharged veterans and the parents of certain deceased members of the armed forces.⁷³ Eligibility

⁷⁰ 1999 Acts, ch. 180 §§3-4.

⁷¹ 2013 Iowa Acts ch. 91 (HF 613).

⁷² Iowa Veterans Home. 2011 Annual Report: Building A Future on the Foundation of Our Past. p. 1.

⁷³ Iowa Code §35D.1(1).



requirements for admission to the IVH are the same as the requirements for hospitalization in a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility.⁷⁴

The IVH serves 650 residents in five main resident care buildings on a 150 acre campus in Marshalltown, Iowa, providing the following services to Iowa's veterans eligible for federal Veterans Affairs medical treatment: nursing care, primary care, dementia care, hospice and palliative care, rehabilitation therapy, mental health services, respiratory care, social services, substance abuse services, and domiciliary and residential care.⁷⁵ An individual who has been diagnosed as having an acute mental illness and considered dangerous to self or others, who is an acute inebriate, or who is addicted to drugs and is continuously disruptive to the operation of the IVH cannot be received or retained at the IVH.⁷⁶

X. Veterans Cemetery

The Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs operates the Iowa Veterans Cemetery located in Dallas County, just north of the city of Van Meter, Iowa. For an individual to meet the military service requirements for burial in the Iowa Veterans Cemetery the individual must have been discharged from active duty under conditions other than dishonorable, died while on active duty, served at least 20 years in the National Guard or Army Reserves and met certain qualifications, or have served in a Presidential call-up during reserve component service.⁷⁷ A \$300 interment fee is charged for an eligible spouse or dependent child to be interred at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery. No fee is charged to a qualifying veteran.

An application for interment at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery may be completed at the time of need or in advance of such need.

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⁷⁴ Iowa Code §35D.1(1), citing to 38 U.S.C. §1710.

⁷⁵ Iowa Veterans Home. 2011 Annual Report: Building A Future on the Foundation of Our Past. p. 1.

⁷⁶ Iowa Code §35D.2(2).

⁷⁷ See 38 C.F.R. §38.620.

Veterans and Military Benefits



Appendix A

Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs Contacts

Colonel Robert King (Ret)

Executive Director

515-727-3444

Robert.King@iowa.gov

Missy Miller

Grants/Bonus Coordinator

515-727-3443

Missy.Miller@iowa.gov

Jill Joseph

Outreach Coordinator

515-727-3442

Jill.Joseph@iowa.gov

Bob Steben

Nursing Home and Benefit Specialist

515-727-3438

Bob.Steben@iowa.gov

Mari Mielke

Secretary

515-727-3440

Mari.Mielke@iowa.gov

Bob Betz

Graves Registration, DD214's

515-727-3431

Bob.Betz@iowa.gov

John Halstead

Veterans Benefits Specialist

515-727-3439

John.Halstead@iowa.gov

Veterans and Military Benefits



Appendix B

Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs Members

<https://va.iowa.gov/commissioner/index.html>

Dan Gannon

3113 NE Briarwood Dr.
Ankeny, IA 50021
Home: 515-965-0144
Cell: 515-991-5257
E-mail: gannonobx@aol.com
Vietnam Veterans of America
Beginning Term: 5/1/11 Term Ends: 4/30/15

Becky Dirks Haugsted

305 North Huber St.
Anamosa, IA 52205
Home: 319-361-2728
Office: 319-462-6055 x305
E-mail: bkyhaugsted@gmail.com
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Beginning Term: 5/1/10 Term Ends: 4/30/14

Todd Jacobus

2608 Aurora Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50310
Cell: 515-897-9530
Office: 515-252-4225
Home: 515-279-1017
E-mail: Todd.Jacobus@us.army.mil
Iowa National Guard
Beginning Term: 5/1/10 Term Ends: 4/30/14

Darlene McMartin

25417 – 440th St.
Hancock, IA 51536
Home: 712-741-5673
Office: 712-328-5797
Fax: 712-328-5726
E-mail: darlene.mcmartin@pottcounty.com
American Legion
Beginning Term: 5/1/10 Terms Ends: 4/30/14

Kate Myers

413 18th St. NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
Cell: 319-538-4351
Office: 319-378-4451
Fax: 319-378-0382
Home: 319-550-4021
E-mail: katemy@mchsi.com
Public Member at Large
Beginning Term: 5/1/11 Term Ends: 4/30/15

Larry Spencer

7725 Wistful Vista #1205
West Des Moines, IA 50266
Home: 515-537-1822
E-mail: spencersinwdm@yahoo.com
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Beginning Term: 5/1/11 Term Ends: 4/30/15

Willard "Bill" Wallace

706 NE Brook Haven Drive
Ankeny, IA 50021
Home: 515-964-3782
Cell: 515-710-4060
E-mail: dadshine@aol.com
Reserve Officers Association
Beginning Term: 7/1/10 Term Ends: 4/30/16

Jon Wille

1301 NE Stone Valley Circle
Ankeny, IA 50021-4160
Home: 515-965-5831
Cell: 515-491-5097
E-mail: jnwille@gmail.com
Disabled American Veterans
Beginning Term: 5/1/12 Term Ends: 4/30/16

Mickey Williams

408 Broadway Street
Harlan, IA 51537
Home: 712-755-2839
Fax: 712-755-7335
E-mail: likethemouse@harlannet.com
American Veterans (AMVETS)
Beginning Term: 5/1/08 Term Ends: 4/30/16

Veterans and Military Benefits



Appendix C Iowa Workforce Development Veterans Representatives

Office	Address	Telephone
Burlington	1000 North Roosevelt Avenue	319-753-1671 x 31411
Cedar Rapids	4444 First Avenue NE, Suite 436	319-365-9474 x 31113
Council Bluffs	300 W. Broadway, Suite 13	712-242-2138
Creston	215 N. Elm Street	641-782-2119 x 30
Davenport	902 W. Kimberly Rd. #51	563-445-3219
Des Moines	430 E. Grand Avenue	515-281-9711
Dubuque	680 Main Street, 2nd Floor	563-556-5895 x 104
Ft. Dodge	Three Triton Circle	515-576-3131 x 229
Mason City	600 South Pierce	641-422-1527
Ottumwa	15260 Truman Street, IHCCN Campus	641-684-5401 x 40003
Sioux City	2508 4th Street	712-233-9030 x 1015
Spencer	217 W. Fifth Street	712-262-1971 x 130
Waterloo	3420 University Avenue, Suite G	319-235-2123 x 314

Veterans and Military Benefits



Appendix D Additional Resources

Iowa Veterans Home

1301 Summit Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158
Phone: 641-752-1501
Toll Free 1-800-645-4591
<http://ivh.iowa.gov>

Iowa Department of Education Division of Community Colleges Veterans & Military Education

400 East 14th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
Fax: 515-242-5988

Iowa National Guard

7105 Northwest 70th Avenue
Johnston, Iowa 50131-1824
Phone: 515-252-4582 / DSN: 431-4582
Fax: 515-252-4656 / DSN: 431-4656
<https://va.iowa.gov>

Veterans Crisis Line

Veterans and their loved ones may call
1-800-273-8255 and **Press 1**, chat online at
www.VeteransCrisisLine.net*, or send a text
message to **838255** to receive free, confidential
support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365
days a year, even if they are not registered with
VA or enrolled in VA health care.

VA Central Iowa

3600 30th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50310
Phone: 515-699-5999
<https://va.iowa.gov>

Iowa City VA Medical Center

601 Hwy 6 West
Iowa City, Iowa 52246
Phone: 319-338-0581
Fax: 319-887-4993
<https://va.iowa.gov>